INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ELECTRONIC NEWS LETTER

"Improving Customer Awareness through better Communications"

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Knowledge Management (Part II) by John Samuelson - What are the benefits of KM? Who is using KM?

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, Knowledge Management (KM) is "*a set of practices that includes identifying and mapping intellectual assets within organizations, generating new knowledge for competitive advantage, making vast amounts of corporate information accessible, sharing best practices, and applying management strategies and technology that support all of the above.*" -- *CAP Ventures*

What are the benefits? Staying Competitive with Knowledge Management : "In the new economy, knowledge is the only real competitive advantage," says Luc Pinard, senior vice president, knowledge, in CGI's management and project performance practice.

Ed Farrelly, vice president of business strategy at ABT Corp., agrees. "Competing in time at Internet speed requires zero-drag-there's no opportunity for re-work or re-learning."

For now-familiar reasons, it becomes more imperative every day that organizations exploit their intellectual capital Some of the areas which benefit companies and government agencies are:

Shorter time to market. New products and/or services have to be conceived, developed and delivered in just months, or even weeks, which puts high demand on resources. "Reinventing the wheel," slows down development, wasting valuable time and risking an organization's competitive advantage.
"Design rework is happening at an alarming rate of more than 65 percent in most companies," points out Philip George, vice president of worldwide marketing at Invention Machine Corp., "simply because people don't know that a problem has already been solved."

Virtual Teaming, Mobile Work Environment: As our work environment becomes more mobile, relying on virtual teaming, we will depend more on knowing: who the resource is to tap into; what to ask the specialist; when the information or service is needed; where to deliver the information or service; how it is going to be applied when delivered.

"Studies have shown that the virtual teams doesn't have to be scattered halfway around the world," says Farrelly. "Once the team members are out of earshot-fifty feet away-many of the 'virtual' issues begin to surface."

Knowledge Worker Turnover**:** When a subject area expert leaves an organization / team, the pain is quickly felt. "It's becoming increasingly difficult to acquire and retain employees, and a company's strongest asset is its people," says Chris Moore, chief technology officer at TrainingServer Inc. "Organizations that do not tap into their mind share and take advantage of the knowledge within will quickly fall behind."

Global Mission**:** As the federal workforce in concert with our primary customer, "The Soldier", are called upon to address national as well as international needs resource constraints will only increase over time. To address global demands intellectual resources-must be managed for the best result. To sustain their competitiveness, organizations will have to carefully structure their processes to efficiently deliver products and services their customers. Yet Ernst &Young estimates that up to 80 percent of a company's intellectual resources-the knowledge residing within it-is not systematically applied to business processes.

Increased Awareness of KM: Now more government and commercial companies understand that they must develop

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strategies and processes expressly designed to best utilize intellectual resources in both day-to-day operations and long-term planning.

These organizations realize that the better they can manage its knowledge, the better it gets at: Enabling employees to access, analyze and apply information regardless of where they are, Developing and distributing products and services faster and more efficiently, Identifying and enhancing best practices, and Creating closer ties to customers.

"The knowledge within a typical organization is an untapped resource," says Neal Moster, director of global knowledge with CGI's platform practice. "You can take advantage of it and thrive, or you can ignore it and fight to survive."

Who is using KM?

Knowledge Management at Hewlett-Packard - CIO Magazine: The culture of Hewlett-Packard is very open and encourages sharing and collaboration; however, the decentralized structure provides little incentive to share knowledge, resources, or investments across business units.

A few information management professionals noticed a number of knowledge management initiatives underway in various parts of the organization. With the goal of facilitating knowledge management across these initiatives, they organized a set of workshops on knowledge management. They hoped to establish informal networks of people to share knowledge and establish common language and management frameworks to support the continuation of knowledge management work. The initiatives they found in the organization were very diverse, from community networks of educators and trainers around the world to networks sharing product knowledge with dealers; these and other initiatives are described in greater detail in the case study. The organizers of the workshops continue to try to leverage experience and knowledge across business units, but realize that they must have a subtle message in keeping with the relaxed culture at HP.
In the presentation, Learning and Churning, HP executives teamed with E&Y researchers to study the connection between the firms hiring practices and culture and its knowledge generation and sharing. In Groundwork V.2 N.4 there is an interview with two HP executives on the relationship between environment and knowledge sharing. Another discussion of an individual knowledge management project at HP can be found in Groundwork V.1 N.1 on implementing the grape VINE tool for knowledge sharing among IT personnel.

British Petroleums Virtual Teamwork Program: BP Exploration underwent a reorganization to a decentralized operating structure; at the same time, senior management recognized there remained a need for employees to share expertise. The challenge for management was to build networks of people with complementary expertise and allow them to communicate robustly with one another. An independent team set out to foster these communities with the goal of developing a new kind of company. The team identified technologies to enable the communities to work together, established several pilot groups, and then coached participants on how to use the available resources.

Army Contracting - Bobby Starling**:** Army Contracting has embarked on a knowledge management initiative to "inter-connect all Army contracting knowledge workers into a seamless, virtual contracting organization that will improve quality and timeliness of decisions, institutionalize learning, and transform knowledge workers into knowledge sharers."

The Army's vision for Contracting Knowledge Management is a global community of experts that use knowledge management (KM) as their framework for day-to-day operations. The concept is built around the implementation of a Web-Portal which will house applicable policies, guidance, actions, training, and most importantly knowledge for supporting the Army procurement business environment.

Users will subscribe to the Army Procurement Knowledge Center (AKPC). This subscription serves as the basis for security, community application, point of contact info, and usage metrics. Housed within this portal will be the Communities Of Practice (COP). This identifies selected functional processes (i.e. Construction, Services, R&D) from which to grow an Army Procurement Knowledge Community. These COP's will be used to facilitate specific procurement processes by putting current, valuable, process specific information into the hands of procurement professionals. Each functional area will have an assigned Content Manager who will have the responsible for keeping the community's content current and useful This KM system will provide knowledge to users based on a specific COP. Knowledge requested will be current, relevant, and value-based. The Army Contracting community believes that by investing in KM today for the capture of contracting specialist experience will pay big dividends in the future.

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KM will allow contracting to adapt with changes in legislation, regulation, vendors, field locations, and any other demand that the external environment places on the Army.

Knowledge Management is much more than just a new term. It provides a structure and approach for integrating data to business processes which are tightly linked to human intelligence / resources. Corporations and government agencies are embracing knowledge management concepts and practices to leverage corporate capabilities to provide them a more competitive edge in today's markets.

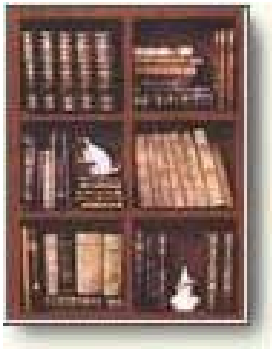
INFORMATION AND DATA SECURITY - PASSWORDS AND YOU - Richard Pitruzzello

Everyone is well aware of the odious duty of remembering his or her passwords. Over the years this has become more burdensome as passwords have become more numerous, longer, and more complicated. To sign a document in CEFMS, for example, requires a user-id, a password, an Oracle password, an electronic signature card, and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the card. All of these, except the card, which is a physical object, are supposed to be memorized.

Why all the bother? User-ids and passwords identify you, as a specific individual, and what permissions you have on that computer system. While the standard Corps of Engineers user-id is easily deciphered, the passwords are randomly generated. When you log in to our e-mail system with your unique library user-id and password, you get YOUR mail, not your boss's mail, not the commander's mail, not my mail, only your mail. If someone else knows your user-id and password, they can read your mail; they can delete messages; they can send mail AS IF IT CAME FROM YOU. They, in effect, ARE you.

Why change passwords? Passwords are changed periodically to prevent them from being deciphered by an unauthorized person. Someone might try to guess your password by trying different combinations of letters hoping to get the right one. By changing passwords at regular intervals we force these people to start guessing all over again. Making it harder to guess passwords is also the reason behind randomly generated passwords, longer passwords, and the inclusion of numbers. The harder it is to guess a password, the more secure it is, and the more sure you are that no one else can masquerade as YOU. If it seems strange that someone would try to guess a password, there are sophisticated computer systems designed to automate the password guessing process. Given time they can "crack" passwords. Increasing the length of the password from 6 to 8 characters and adding numbers increases the number of passwords that have to be guessed by over 1,000 times.

In the future passwords will probably be a thing of the past. Very sophisticated "biometric" devices will identify you by such things as reading your finger print, scanning the iris of your eye, or recognizing your voice. Many of these methods are already in use in very secure environments. As the cost of such devices falls, they will become cost effective for more routine applications. Until then, user-ids and passwords are the best method we have of identifying who are authorized access to our computer systems and of denying that access to those who are not authorized. So as the security guru at HQUSACE puts in his signature block, "***DO NOT SHARE YOUR PASSWORDS WITH OTHERS Not even with your mother.***



VIRUAL LIBRARY - Daniel Talbott

The Directorate of Information Management established a Virtual Library (http://bbs.hnd.usace.army.mil/im/virtual.htm)on IM's (http://bbs.hnd.usace.army.mil/im/index.htm) web page that is linked to various government, DOD, DA, and USACE online reference libraries. The purpose is to provide our customers with easy access to online reference libraries to assist them in their research on material needed to support their projects and program. In addition to the online libraries there are links to federal news publications as well as personnel magazines to provide you with the latest changes and news affecting all of us in the federal workforce. If there are any other reference you would like to include in this area to enhance is functionality or usefulness to the Center, please send an email to Mr.

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Daniel Talbott or visit him at the Center's library on the first floor.

IT Jargon – Terms that are becoming more common in the work place!

COOKIE: The most common meaning of "Cookie" on the Internet refers to a piece of information sent by a Web *Server* to a Web *Browser* that the Browser software is expected to save and to send back to the Server whenever the browser makes additional requests from the Server. Depending on the type of Cookie used, and the Browser's settings, the Browser may accept or not accept the Cookie, and may save the Cookie for either a short time or a long time. Cookies might contain information such as login or registration information, online "shopping cart" information, user preferences, etc.

HTTP:(HyperText Transfer Protocol) -- The protocol for moving *hypertext* files across the *Internet*. Requires a HTTP *client* program on one end, and an HTTP *server* program on the other end. HTTP is the most important protocol used in the *World Wide Web (WWW)*.

HTML:(HyperText Markup Language) -- The coding language used to create *Hypertext* documents for use on the *World Wide Web*. HTML looks a lot like old-fashioned typesetting code, where you surround a block of text with codes that indicate how it should appear, additionally, in HTML you can specify that a block of text, or a word, is linked to another file on the Internet.

INTRANET:A private *network* inside a company or organization that uses the same kinds of software that you would find on the public *Internet*, but that is only for internal use. As the Internet has become more popular many of the tools used on the Internet are being used in private networks, for example, many companies have web servers that are available only to employees. Note that an Intranet may not actually be an internet-- it may simply be a network.

ISP: (Internet Service Provider) -- An institution that provides access to the Internet in some form, usually for money.

PORTAL: Usually used as a marketing term to described a Web site that is or is intended to be the first place people see when using the Web. Typically a "Portal site" has a catalog of web sites, a search engine, or both. A Portal site may also offer email and other service to entice people to use that site as their main "point of entry" (hence "portal") to the Web.

URL: (Uniform Resource Locator) -- The standard way to give the address of any resource on the Internet that is part of the World Wide Web (WWW). A URL looks like this:

http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil

Suggestions

If you would like to make a suggestion on how we can improve our services or would like to make a suggestion on ways to improve this letter please fill out our suggestion form. Click here ✉